

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 IO-14 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 ACDA-19 OMB-01

NIC-01 SCCT-02 DRC-01 /155 W
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R 061402Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1404

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USUN NEW YORK 3688

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 12032

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, XF

SUBJ: KUZNETSOV ON GENEVA CONFERENCE AND ON ARAFAT VISIT

REF: MOSCOW 11930

1. SUMMARY. FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KUZNETSOV (WHO IS RUNNING THE MFA IN GROMYKO'S ABSENCE) MADE A STRONG PITCH FOR EARLY REACTIVATION OF THE GENEVA MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE DURING MY CALL ON ANOTHER SUBJECT AUGUST 5. KUZNETSOV SAID THAT THE U.S. COULD HELP IN RECONVENING GENEVA AND THAT THE MATTER IS URGENT, BUT DID NOT SPECIFY A DATE. HE MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THE ISSUE OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA
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SHOULD NOT BE A REASON FOR DELAY (THUS IMPLYING THAT THE

PALESTINIAN ISSUE CAN BE SETTLED AFTER THE CONFERENCE RECONVENES). AND HE EXPRESSED SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO RECALL AMBASSADOR VINOGRADOV FROM LEAVE TO RESUME THE TALKS. KUZNETSOV ALSO DISCUSSED THE RECENT ARAFAT VISIT, STRESSING THAT THE PLO IS NOW RECOGNIZED AS THE VOICE OF THE PALESTINIANS AND THAT THE SOVIETS SUPPORT PLO PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY. HE STOPPED SHORT OF SAYING THAT THE USSR NOW RECOGNIZES THE PLO AS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING MY CALL ON FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KUZNETSOV ON BERLIN, I ASKED HIM FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE ARAFAT VISIT. KUZNETSOV HAD BEEN THE HIGHEST-RANKING SOVIET GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL TO MEET ARAFAT.

3. KUZNETSOV SAID THAT THE ESSENCE OF THE TALKS WAS CONTAINED IN THE COMMUNIQUE (REFTEL, WHICH HE DOWNGRADED BY CALLING IT A "MESSAGE." HE WANTED TO EMPHASIZE TWO MAIN POINTS. FIRST, WHILE ARAFAT HAD VISITED THE USSR BEFORE, THIS TIME HE CAME FOLLOWING A CONFERENCE OF PALESTINIANS WHICH MADE IT MORE OR LESS CLEAR THAT THE PLO IS RECOGNIZED AS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION WHICH CAN SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE PALESTINIANS. THE VOICE OF THIS FACTION IS THE VOICE OF THE MOVEMENT. I ASKED WHETHER THIS AMOUNTED TO OFFICIAL SOVIET RECOGNITION OF THE PLO AS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS. KUZNETSOV HEDGED, SAYING THAT "WE DIDN'T PUT IT DIRECTLY" IN THE COMMUNIQUE-- WHICH NOTED THE SATISFACTION OF THE TWO SIDES WITH THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE ALGIERS AND LAHORE CONFERENCES ON RECOGNITION OF THE PLO.

4. KUZNETSOV'S SECOND POINT WAS TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON PLO PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA ON AN EQUAL BASIS. I ASKED IF THE DECISION ON PLO PARTICIPATION SHOULD BE DECIDED BEFORE OR AFTER THE MEPC CONVENES. KUZNETSOV RESPONDED THAT THIS QUESTION WAS NOT DISCUSSED IN DETAIL DURING THE ARAFAT VISIT BUT WAS LEF OPEN, "FOLLOWING THE FORMULA OF THE U.S.-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE." KUZNETSOV THEN ASSERTED THAT THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE SHOULD NOT BE A REASON FOR DELAYING THE REOPENING OF THE CONFERENCE. HE ADDED THAT MANY PRACTICAL QUESTIONS CAN BE SOLVED AT THE BEGINNING OR DURING THE COURSE OF THE CONFERENCE. ASKED IF THE SOVIETS ENVISAGE A SEPARATE REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE

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PALESTINIANS, KUZNETSOV SAID THAT IT WAS QUITE CLEAR THAT THE PALESTINIANS ARE OPPOSED TO BEING A PART OF THE JORDANIAN DELEGATION.

5. DURING THE SOVIET-PLO TALKS, ACCORDING TO KUZNETSOV, ARAFAT STRESSED THAT THE PLO IS OPPOSED TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 AS IT APPLIES TO THE PALESTINIANS AND THUS IT WAS NOT MENTIONED IN COMMUNIQUE.

ARAFAT SAID THAT THE RESOLUTION TAKES THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM PURELY AS A REFUGEE PROBLEM, SAYING NOTHING ABOUT PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RIGHTS. KUZNETSOV ADDED THAT THE PLO DOES FAVOR THE PART OF THE RESOLUTION WHICH REQUIRES ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL.

6. KUZNETSOV CONCLUDED HIS DISCUSSION OF THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE BY NOTING THAT THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WAS MENTIONED IN TWO CONSECUTIVE U.S.-SOVIET SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE; HE ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE FOR PEACE OF U.S. AND SOVIET EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM. I AGREED WITH HIM, ADDING THAT A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH IS THE BEST WAY TO GO ABOUT SUCH THINGS.

7. KUZNETSOV INTERJECTED INTO OUR DISCUSSION OF THE PALESTINIANS A STRONG PLEA FOR AN EARLY REACTIVATION OF THE MEPC. HE NOTED THAT THE SUMMIT FORMULATION, "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE", WAS FLEXIBLE AND COULD MEAN QUITE A LONG TIME. HE SAID THAT THE SITUATION WAS MORE OR LESS FAVORABLE FOR REACTIVATING THE CONFERENCE AND THAT THE U.S. COULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. DELAY WILL ONLY MAKE THE ME SITUATION WORSE; REACTIVATING GENEVA IS AN URGENT MATTER. WHEN I ASKED ABOUT TIMING, KUZNETSOV SAID HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY SPECIFIC DATE IN MIND BUT THE SOVIET SIDE WAS "READY AT ANY MOMENT." HE SAID THAT, THOUGH VINOGRADOV IS NOW ON LEAVE, HE CAN EASILY BE CALLED BACK.

8. COMMENT: WHILE THE SUBJECT OF THE MIDDLE EAST WAS RAISED AT MY INITIATIVE, KUZNETSOV WAS CLEARLY ANXIOUS TO MAKE A MAJOR POINT OF THE NEED TO REACTIVATE GENEVA SOON. HIS REMARK ABOUT RECALLING VINOGRADOV FROM LEAVE MAY HAVE BEEN MEANT MORE JOGULARLY THAN SERIOUSLY. BUT AT A MINIMUM HIS COMMENTS APPEAR TO REFLECT A STRONG SOVIET CONCERN THAT THE MEPC REOPENING MAY SLIP BEYOND EARLY FALL.

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